

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 HA-05 TRSE-00

MCT-01 /083 W

-----040820 252002Z /40

O P 251220Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6724

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NY IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MZ, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: MUGABE AND NKOMO PRESS CONFERENCE IN MAPUTO

1. SUMMARY: PF LEADERS ROBERT MUGABE AND JOSHUA NKOMO HELD THIRTY MINUTE PRESS CONFERENCE IN MAPUTO ON FEB. 23. PF LEADERS ISSUED STRONG STATEMENT (A) ACCUSING U.S. AND UK OF "CONNIVANCE AND ASSISTANCE" IN PROMOTING INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, (B) CHARGING THAT U.S. AND UK ARE UNDERMINING EFFORTS OF FRONT LINE STATES AND (D) ALLEGING THAT U.S. IS "BIASED AGAINST" PF. DURING QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD, BOTH MUGABE AND NKOMO TOOK STRONG ISSUE WITH ROLE U.S. IS PLAYING IN TALKS AND ASSERTED THAT ZANU AND ZAPU ARMIES "HAVE MOVED A LONG WAY TOWARD" UNIFICATION. IN VERY BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH DCM FOLLOWING PRESS CONFERENCE.

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CONFERENCE, MUGABE AND NKOMO SAID THEY ARE PREPARED TO RENEW CONVERSATIONS WITH U.S. AND UK AT ANY TIME, PROVIDED CONVERSATIONS ARE "SERIOUS".

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PF STATEMENT:

QUOTE: WE MET HERE IN MAPUTO YESTERDAY, THE 24 OF FEBRUARY, AND

THIS MORNING TO REVIEW AND ASSESS THE CURRENT POLITICAL AND MILITARY SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE VIS-A-VIS THE ANGLO-AMERICAN MANOEUVRES. WE NOW WISH TO EXPRESS AND AFFIRM OUR POSITION AS FOLLOWS:

1. WE ARE RESOLVED IN OUR TOTAL CONDEMNATION OF THE SELL-OUT AGREEMENT REACHED IN SALISBURY BETWEEN THE BLACK PUPPETS AND THE REBEL FASCIST SETTLER REGIME. WE ARE FULLY AWARE THAT THIS TREACHEROUS DEAL WAS REACHED WITH THE CONNIVANCE AND ASSISTANCE OF THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN IMPERIALISTS.

2. BRITISH COMPLIENCY IN A DEAL, THE EFFECT OF WHICH IS TO VALIDATE SMITH'S UNILATERAL INDEPENDENCE, LENDS FULL WEIGHT TO OUR CRITICISM THAT IN HER APPROACH TO OUR PROBLEM SHE IS GUIDED BY HER RACIAL ATTITUDE RATHER THAN BY PRINCIPLE AND OBJECTIVITY. IT IS QUITE CLEAR FROM DR OWEN'S RECENT STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON THE 16TH FEBRUARY, 1978, IN WHICH HE GAVE HIS FULL BACKING TO THE INTERNAL AGREEMENT, THAT THE MAN HE ORIGINALLY SET OUT TO REMOVE UNDER HIS PROPOSALS IS NOW THE VERY MAN TO WHOM HE SEEKS TO GIVE HIS FULL BLESSING ON NO OTHER BASIS THAN THAT OF COLOUR.

3. IN HIS AFOREMENTIONED STATEMENT MADE TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, DR. OWENS VIRTUALLY APEALED TO SMITH TO INVOLVE US IN HIS ILLICIT TALKS WHEN HE UNASHAMEDLY STATED "OR AT LEAST HE SMITH MUST GIVE THEM AN OFFER OR INVOLVE THEM IN AN ARRANGEMENT WHICH THEY CAN HONOURABLY CONSIDER AND BE INVOLVED IN". WHAT NONSENSE*
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ONLY YESTERDAY, OWEN WAS VOWING THAT GIVEN AMERICAN SUPPORT, THE SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS, THE OAU AND THE FRONT LINE STATES HE WOULD REMOVE SMITH FOR HIS REMOVAL WAS A PREREQUISITE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN IRREVERSIBLE PROCESS. NOW, HAVING WON THAT SUPPORT, HE HAS DISHONOURABLY CHANGED POSTURE, COMPLETELY UNMINDFUL OF THE COMMITMENT IN WHICH HE HAS INVOLVED HONOURABLE ORGANISATIONS AND PRESIDENTS OF THE FRONT LINE STATES.

4. WE HEREBY WISH TO EXPRESSLY STATE TO BOTH THE BRITISH AND AMERICANS THAT, COMMITTED TO PRINCIPLE, HONOUR AND DIGNITY AS WE ARE, WE CANNOT ENTERTAIN THEIR DREAM TO BE DRAWN INTO BEING PARTY TO THE EVIL DEAL JUST STRUCK OR TO THE CONTINUING SELL-OUT TALKS IN SALISBURY. OUR EMPHATIC POSITION HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT THE ONLY VALID AND MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS CAPABLE OF YIELDING A VALID AGREEMENT ARE THOSE BETWEEN BRITAIN AS THE COLONIAL POWER AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AS THE AUTHENTIC REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE. WE REMAIN OPEN FOR THIS KIND OF NEGOTIATIONS.

5. WE WISH TO POINT OUT THAT OUR EARLIER FEARS ABOUT THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE UNITED STATES ARE NOW BEING PROVED CORRECT. WHEN WE

OBJECTED TO THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE UNITED STATES IN OUR CONSTITUTIONAL NEGOTIATIONS WE HAD FORESEEN THE DANGER OF HER THROWING HER FULL WEIGHT BEHIND BRITAIN IN A BID TO INSTALL A PUPPET REGIME IN ZIMBABWE. THE RECENT STATEMENTS BY THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT SUPPORTING THE AGREEMENT REACHED IN SALISBURY CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE UNITED STATES BIAS AGAINST US AND NATURALLY INVOKE US INTO RE-EXAMINING THE WHOLE QUESTION OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS. THEIR DEMONSTRABLE PARTIALITY CANNOT BE LEFT UNCHALLENGED.

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NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 HA-05
TRSE-00 MCT-01 /083 W
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6. THE SALISBURY INTERNAL AGREEMENT HAS NOW CLEARLY DRAWN A LINE OF DEMARCATION BETWEEN THE PEOPLE'S ENEMIES AND THE PEOPLE'S ALLIES. THE GANG OF OUR - BISHOP MUZOREWA, CHIEF JEREMIAH CHIRAU, REV. NDABANINGI SITHOLE AND JAMES CHIKEREMA - HAVING JOINED FORCES WITH FASCIST IAN SMITH NOW CONSTITUTE TOGETHER OUR PRINCIPAL ENEMY WHOM OUR FORCES HAVE VOWED TO CRUSH. INDEED, WE HAVE FULLY NOTED THAT BISHOP MUZOREWA IS NOW TREACHEROUSLY CALLING UPON VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN SMITH'S FORCES AS HE HIMSELF HAS DONE. THIS IS A CALL TO JOIN FORCES TO MURDER, MAIM, SUPPRESS AND OPPRESS THE MASSES IN ORDER TO HAVE THEIR GANG INSTALLED IN POWER.

7. WE, THE LEADERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND ITS LIBERATION

FORCES CALL UPON ALL THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE, WHEREVER THEY MAY BE, TO CLOSE RANKS AND RALLY BEHIND THE INTENSIFIED ARMED STRUGGLE SPEARHEADED BY THE PATRIOTIC FRONT.

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IM WE ARE FIRMLY RESOLVED AND MORE DETERMINED THAN EVER BEFORE TO CONTINUE OUR BITTER STRUGGLE FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF TRUE FREEDOM AND GENUINE INDEPENDENCE, AND ACCORDINGLY IT IS OUR COMMON BOND TO ENSURE THE IMMEDIATE INTENSIFICATION OF OUR WAR EFFORT TO DEFEAT THE FASCIST SMITH, THE COLLABORATOR GANG OF FOUR, AND THE EVIL ANGLO-AMERICAN MACHINATIONS. END QUOTE.

3. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION: FOLLOWING PRESENTATION OF STATEMENT, MUGABE AND NKOMO ANSWERED SEVERAL QUESTIONS:

A. DID ANYTHING USEFUL COME OUT OF THE MALTA TALKS? NKOMO SAID THAT AS A RESULT OF MALTA, BRITAIN HAS A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PF POSITION AND THE PF HAS A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF THE UK POSITION. "IN THAT SENSE, MALTA WAS USEFUL AND BENEFICIAL." HOWEVER, NKOMO SAID, THE PF TAKES "STRONG ISSUE" WITH THE STATEMENTS THAT FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN HAS MADE SINCE MALTA.

B. IN VIEW OF REMARKS ABOUT U.S. IN PF STATEMENT, IS PF PREPARED TO CONTINUE TALKS WITH UK WHILE AMERICANS ARE REPRESENTED? MUGABE SAID THAT THE "U.S. HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT IT IS BIASED AGAINST US." WE THOUGHT THEY WOULD PLAY AN IMPARTIAL ROLE, STRENGTHENING BRITISH RESOLVE. WE THOUGHT THEY WOULD ADOPT AN OBJECTIVE VIEWPOINT. "THIS HAS NOT BEEN THE CASE." NKOMO ADDED THAT THE PF WAS STILL CONSIDERING ITS POSITION ABOUT THE U.S. AND THAT THE PF WOULD HAVE TO TALK TO THE BRITISH TO FIND OUT WHAT ROLE THE U.S. WILL PLAY. NKOMO CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT "PF WILL OBJECT TO U.S. PRESENCE AT ANY FUTURE TALKS UNTIL THIS POINT IS CLARIFIED."

C. HAVE ZANU AND ZAPU UNIFIED THEIR ARMIES? NKOMO SAID THAT PRESENCE OF HE AND MUGABE TOGETHER IN MAPUTO INDICATES ZANU AND ZAPU ARE UNIFIED. WITH REGARD TO ZANLA AND ZIPRA, "THEY HAVE

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MOVED A LONG WAY TOWARD" UNIFICATION.

D. DO SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA HAVE ARMIES? MUGABE INDICATED THAT THE PF "HAS THE IMPRESSION" THAT SOUTH AFRICA AND SOME REACTIONARY AFRICAN STATES ARE NOW TRAINING AN ARMY FOR SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA. THE PF IS ATTEMPTING TO CONFIRM THIS THROUGH OTHER

SOURCES.

4. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE RESS CONFERENCE, DCM SPOKE BRIEFLY TO NKOMO, MUGABE AND EDSON ZVOBGO (ZVOBGO READ STATEMENT AT PRESS CONFERENCE). MUGABE AND NKOMO SAID THAT PF WAS PREPARED AT ANY TIME TO RESUME TALKS WITH UK AND U.S. AS LONG AS CONVERSATIONS WERE "SERIOUS" AND DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PRESS CONFERENCES, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MAPUTO00224
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780088-0467
Format: TEL
From: MAPUTO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780213/aaaaakhc.tel
Line Count: 232
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: cea1b5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3476655
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA: MUGABE AND NKOMO PRESS CONFERENCE IN MAPUTO
TAGS: SOPN, PDEV, MZ, RH, (MUGABE, ROBERT), (NKOMO, JOSHUA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/cea1b5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014